30/28- 11 (1)

WELCOME ADDRESS

PRESENTED TO

General K. M. CARIAPPA, O.B.E.,

Commander-in-Chief, Army.

BY

The Vellore Municipal Council

on

11th JUNE, 1951.

Sir,

We, the Members and Chairman of the Vellore Municipal Council, have great pleasure in extending to you a very sincere and hearty welcome on your first visit to this historic town, which has been noted also for its architecture and glorious military traditions.

At the outset, we offer our heartiest congratulations to you on being the first Indian to attain the highest rank of Commander-in-Chief of the Army. We have been following with interest your distinguished military career and your various achievements and were greatly gratified when you were appointed to this exalted position. You come of a martial race. You are the first Indian cadet to be commissioned, first Indian to enter the Staff College and the first Indian Brigadier to visit United States of America. You are the first Indian also to rise to this highest military rank by sheer dint of work and merit. The history of your career tells that you are not only a military officer enforcing discipline among the soldiers in the best interest of the country, but a gentleman with a human touch, and this circumstance too should have contributed to the success of your career. We are also following with appreciation your efforts at establishing affectionate relations between the Army and the Civilian population of the country. You are the best-fitted for your job, for this position of highest military responsibility in this land. May God preserve you long to see to the growth of our Army of this great country into a well-disciplined and patriotic force, second to none among the armies of the world.

This is a place which first ushered in the dawn of self-realisation and urge for freedom for our mother-land, in the shape of the famous Vellore mutiny. The credit for this awakening goes mainly to the great military forces of that period. As Indians and soldiers they realised for the first time their self-respect and their then unsatisfactory position and status in the military service under foreign officers. They rightly, in our humble opinion, revolted against the high-handed, arrogant, and misplaced zeal of the authorities then. Their self-respect was hurt to the core and though as a people they were suppressed, they rose against the iniquities to which they were subjected. All glory to those brave Indian soldiers whose bones are even now preserved by mother earth in the Fort Maidan and the Maidan in front of our Office. The above was the first spark of urge for freedom on the part of the military and the citizens of Vellore, which culminated in our first war of Independence in 1857.

The above is a brief panorama of this historic town. It has now grown from a small garrison town into the present small modern city of Vellore - thanks to the efforts of our predecessors for the civic advancement of this town. Once this place was known as a place for retired military men. Even to-day you find a number of families who claim their descent from the old military stock.

Our district stands first in the matter of recruitment to the Army in Tamilnad during World War II, and we are proud of this contribution.

Finally, Sir, We wish you a glorious career and a long life of usefulness to this great country of ours.

We Remain,

THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
VELLORE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL.

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